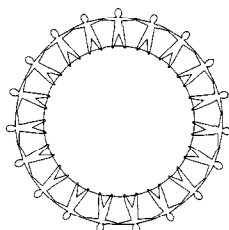

*Commemorating 125th Anniversary
of the Birth of
Mahatma Gandhi*

Mahatma Gandhi Medal

*Memorial Lecture:
Gandhi in the Global Village*

Declaration on Tolerance



UNITED NATIONS
YEAR FOR TOLERANCE

1995

SHS-96/WS/6

Prolegomenon



THE year 1995 marked the fiftieth anniversary of UNESCO. It was chosen as the United Nations Year for Tolerance, and UNESCO was made the lead agency for its observance. This year also coincided with the 125th anniversary of the birth of India's "Father of the Nation" – Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known worldwide as MAHATMA (great soul) GANDHI. UNESCO took advantage of this happy coincidence and, as a tribute to Gandhi, it struck 125th Anniversary Mahatma Gandhi Medal (in gold, silver, and bronze); set-up a photo exhibition on Gandhi's life and times – *My life is my Message*; and organized a Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture.

An advocate of non-violence, a propagator of tolerance, and a preacher of peace, Mahatma Gandhi has been, to quote Federico Mayor – Director-General of UNESCO – "a vital source of inspiration wherever men and women seek to oppose violence and injustice by mobilizing their fellow beings in support of a larger vision of unity." On several occasions, President Nelson Mandela talked about Gandhi's "incalculable influence" on the history of South Africa. Martin Luther King of the United States of America – whose civil rights movement followed Gandhian path – acknowledged his debt to Gandhi in these words:

Before this century, virtually all revolutions had been based on hope and hate. The hope was expressed in the rising expectation of freedom and justice. The hate was an old expression of bitterness towards the perpetrators of the old order. It was the hate that made revolutions bloody and violent. What was new about Mahatma Gandhi's movement in India was that he mounted a revolution on hope and love, hope and non-violence...The same new emphasis characterized the civil rights movement in our country...

UNESCO joined the world community in celebrating Gandhi's birth centenary in 1969. The October 1969 issue of the UNESCO *Courier* was dedicated to him, focusing on "The heritage of non-violence". At that time UNESCO republished the selection of Gandhi's writings (originally brought out in 1958), with the title : *All men are brothers : Life and thoughts of Mahatma Gandhi as told in his own words*. Compiled and edited by Krishna Kripalani, this selection carried an "Introduction" written by Professor Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, at the time Vice-President of India, and later President. Professor Radhakrishnan outlined the main features of Mahatma Gandhi's philosophy and his influence in promoting international friendship and understanding. The publication reached a wide public and made better known the different aspects of Gandhi's personality and writings; it is already out of print.

As part of the celebration of Gandhi's 125th birth anniversary, UNESCO invited the Prime Minister of India, Shri P.V. Narasimha Rao, to deliver the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture on the theme: *Gandhi in the Global Village*.

On 12 June 1995, Mr Rao paid a visit to the UNESCO House to inaugurate the exhibition on Gandhi, and to deliver the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture. The Prime Minister gifted a bronze statue of Mahatma Gandhi to the Director-General; to reciprocate, the Director-General gave the UNESCO medals of Gandhi and Nehru as souvenirs to the Prime Minister.

Welcoming the Prime Minister, the Director-General said : "It is a happy coincidence that the Year for Tolerance should be celebrated at the same time as the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, who embodied the spirit of tolerance. This was inherent in his philosophy and practice of non-violence, in his vision of all human beings as engaged in search of Truth that transcended them. Gandhiji was a nationalist, but he was neither parochial nor chauvinist. He was the practitioner of a universal religion that respected all cultures." Mr Mayor described Gandhi as "one of the truly great figures of our – or, any – century".

Paying personal tribute to the Prime Minister Rao, the Director-General said that he could not think of a better person to deliver



Prime Minister of India inaugurating the exhibition on Gandhi: My Life is my Message

this lecture. He introduced Mr Rao as “a long-standing disciple of Mahatma Gandhi” and “a politician and statesman whose breadth of experience is matched only by the range of his interests.”

Thanking the Prime Minister for the strong support he has given to the ‘Education for All’ (EFA) process launched at Jomtien, the Director-General remarked: “You have helped through your enlightened leadership to signpost the path to peace and progress in the years ahead”.

Welcome to the Indian Prime Minister was also extended, on behalf of the French Government, and the President of the Republic of France, by Mrs Françoise de Panafieu, Minister of Tourism. She referred to UNESCO’s universal mission to bridge the gap between peoples and cultures and said that this “universal mission of UNESCO is also reflected today by its wish to pay homage to a person who has also become universal because of his values of tolerance ...”

Prime Minister P.V. Narasimha Rao began his hour-long speech on the topic, *Gandhi in the Global Village*, by saying : “Gandhiji would have lived up to this age if not for the insanity of an assassin’s bullet”. In his scholarly discourse, Mr Narasimha Rao emphasized the contemporary relevance of Mahatma Gandhi’s principles of non-violence in issues ranging from the widening gulf of wealth between and within nations to nuclear disarmament. Mr Rao recounted the early childhood experiences of Gandhi that shaped his personality, and traced the influences of his exposure to the West when he went to study law in England at the tender age of 19. He briefly dwelt upon Gandhi’s involvement in the fight against apartheid in South Africa where legal business led him in 1893. It was here that he crafted the strategy of *Satyagraha* (soul force) to resist an unjust law through non-violent means. Calling it the “dextrous artistry of the Satyagraha movement”, Mr Rao recalled how he was himself drawn into the movement as a young student and how the movement reached the rural and remote areas of India, planting the flag of nationalism in almost all the villages and involving nearly forty million people – 10 per cent of the India’s population at the time – from all communities and religions. The reason of Gandhi’s tremendous success in mass mobilization



Prime Minister Rao presenting a bust of Gandhi to the Director-General

Photo UNESCO/Michel Claude



Ustad Amjad Ali Khan playing Ram Dhun on Sarod

Photo UNESCO



Recital by Dr Balamurali Krishna

Photo UNESCO/Inez Forbes

was attributed by Mr Rao to the fact that “the political actor in Gandhi, throughout his long career, was subordinate to the moral actor.” Satyagraha was a “creative synthesis, flowing from a fusion of Gandhi’s moral anguish with his social concerns as a political actor.” Mr Rao said: “Gandhi took recourse to popular religious imagery as a potent means to rally the poor to the cause of nationalism and, at the same time, to heighten the level of their social consciousness.” Elaborating the Gandhian concept of non-violence, Mr Rao said that “...non-violence, in his view, was the weapon of the strong rather than of the weak; just as it was also a weapon that drew victor and vanquished into a common association of reconciliation and moral regeneration... Not surprisingly, he looked askance at the power which grew out of the barrel of the gun, or rested upon the ephemeral calculus of wealth.” He concluded by saying that “Gandhi’s relevance is being rediscovered as we move towards a new era in which wealth generation, political organization, social ordering and spiritual creativity are undergoing a revolutionary transformation... Perhaps generations to come will turn to him increasingly as they wrestle with the problems of existence in an era which holds out a potential of unprecedented moral and material creativity through individual and collective human endeavour.” Mahatma Gandhi, he said, “stands out as one of the towering figures of our century.”

The Prime Minister’s speech was followed by a concert composed for the occasion by India’s two eminent artists: Dr M. Balamurali Krishna, a vocalist; and Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, world-renowned maestro of Sarod – an Indian stringed instrument.

Dr Balamurali Krishna began his vocal recital with raga *Mohan Gandhi* which he had specially created as a tribute to Gandhi. This raga personifies peace, tranquillity, and a serene calm through a well-arranged configuration of notes (*swaras*) that reflect the principles and steadfast ideals for which Mahatma Gandhi dedicated his entire life. The composition, *Satya Sanatan Satpat Sunder Salila Shivam Shriram*, was set to *Keharawa Taal*, that is eight beats to a cycle. He concluded his recital with a hymn in Sanskrit, *Pibare Ram Rasam* – a poetry in motion addressed to mind to taste the nectar of Lord Rama and find solace in this world of turmoil.



Photo UNESCO/Inez Forbes

Written by philosopher-saint-singer Sadasiva Brahmendra, the hymn to the Lord was tuned in raga *Ahir Bhairava*.

Ustad Amjad Ali Khan, the world-known Sarod maestro, first played Mahatma Gandhi's favourite prayer, Ram Dhun – *Raghupati Raghava Raja Ram*. Then he performed a piece entitled "Bapu Kauns", dedicated to Mahatma Gandhi and specially composed by him for Gandhi's 125th Birth Anniversary celebrations.

Both the artists received loud applause from the audience. They were awarded Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Medals by the Director-General.

The ceremony was telecast live in India by *Door Darshan*.

This publication carries the Gandhi Memorial Lecture delivered by Prime Minister of India, and the speeches made by the Director-General as well as the Minister of Tourism of the Republic of France on that occasion.

In addition, an article contributed by Mr Federico Mayor, the Director-General of UNESCO, to a publication¹ brought out by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations on the occasion of the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi has been reprinted. Also reproduced is a "picture album" published in *The UNESCO Courier* of October 1969 on the occasion of Mahatma Gandhi's birth Centenary. The essay accompanying the album was written by French Philosopher, Olivier Lacombe.

The *Declaration of Principles on Tolerance*, adopted and signed by the Member States of UNESCO on 16 November 1995, is given at the end.

30 JANUARY 1996

YOGESH ATAL

Co-ordinator for
Mahatma Gandhi's 125th Birth Anniversary
celebrations

1 *Mahatma Gandhi – 125 Years*, edited by B. R. Nanda; Indian Council for Cultural Relations and New Age International Publishers Ltd (Wiley Eastern Ltd), New Delhi. 1995 (ISBN: 81-224-0723-4).

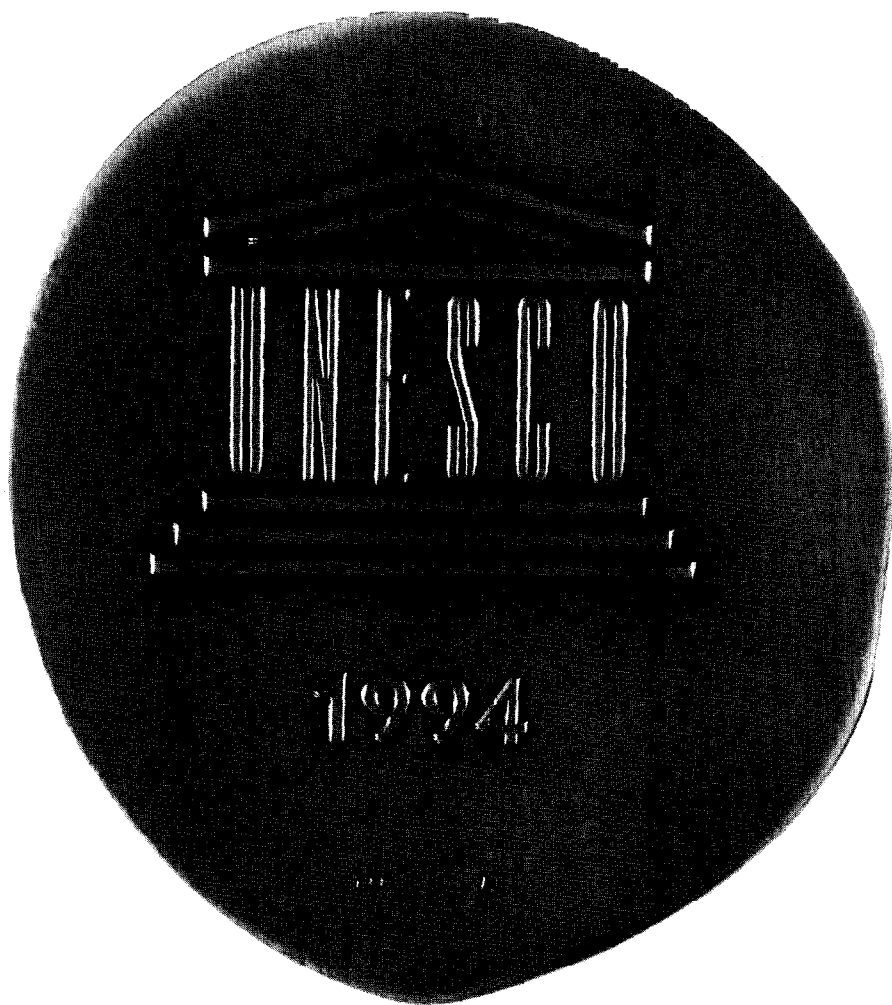


A TRIBUTE TO GANDHI

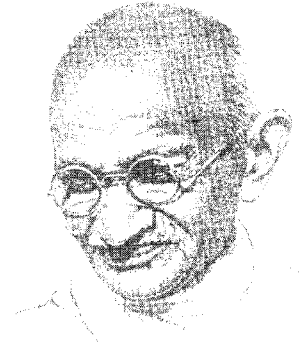
*To mark the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi,
UNESCO issued an official medal bearing his portrait.*

*Engraved by the French artist Yves Trémois,
the medal is available in gold, silver and bronze.*

*Etched beneath the profile of the Mahatma is the message of hope:
"IN THE MIDST OF DARKNESS LIGHT PREVAILS"
(Tamaso ma Jyotirgamaya)*

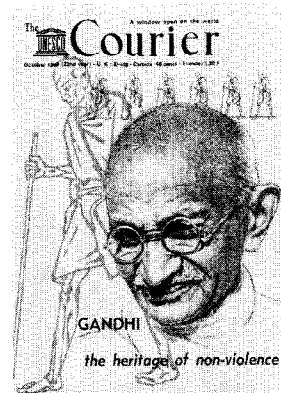


Mahatma Gandhi



Landmarks in an Extraordinary Life

Olivier Lacombe



*This is a reprint from the October
1969 issue of
The UNESCO COURIER
devoted to Mahatma Gandhi
on his birth centenary.
The essay is written by the French
philosopher Olivier Lacombe,
author of the book
Gandhi, ou la force de l'âme
(Gandhi, or the Power of the Soul)*

1. In London, Rediscovery of Hinduism

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on October 2, 1869, at Porbandar, a port on the south-west coast of the Kathiawar peninsula in Western India, and capital of a principality in which several members of his family, including his father, had held the office of Prime Minister.

He died in New Delhi on January 30, 1948, in his 79th year, by the hand of a Hindu extremist.

Three great periods mark the course of his life: a period of preparation only remotely connected with his future mission, set in India and England, which ended in 1893 when he was 24; a South African period (1893-1914) when Gandhi forged his "method" and tentatively practised it in a marginal area of the Indian Diaspora; and a period of fulfilment (1915-1948) when he perfected his method in India itself, applying it on an increasing scale until its message was carried beyond the frontiers of the vast nation he had fathered.

Like so many educated Indians, Gandhi had first to master and reconcile the dual cultures of East and West which disputed possession of his heart and mind. It is easy to imagine how closely the world of his early childhood was bounded by the Hindu tradition. He belonged to a "caste" family which ranked third in the tiers of the rigidly graded Hindu society ("Gandhi" means "spice merchant"), though the family's status was certainly improved by the political and administrative functions entrusted to some of its members.

Gandhi was 16 when his father died. Two years later he left for England, against the orders of his caste, which excommunicated him. While in Britain (1888-1891) studying to be a barrister, he not only improved his acquaintance with Western culture, but also rediscovered the Hindu faith in which he had been nurtured.



Gandhi in India, aged 7

Photo © Snark International



...aged 17

Photo PIB, New Delhi



Law student in London, aged 20

Photo Sumati Morarjee, Bombay

He had never read the “*Bhagavad Gita*”, the “Song Celestial”, which was later to become his daily solace. It was revealed to him in the English translation by Sir Edwin Arnold, which he read in conjunction with the Sanskrit original. The same English poet and writer unfolded to him, in “The light of Asia”, the spiritual epic of Buddha.

Gandhi’s reading transfigured his quasi-instinctive fidelity to the creed of his forebears, but at the same time, he studied the Bible; the Sermon on the Mount, with its precept that evil should not be resisted by evil, impressed him deeply.

*Lawyer in Johannesburg
(South Africa)
...aged 40*

Photo PIB, New Delhi



2. Fight against Racism in South Africa

After his return to India in 1891, Gandhi went to South Africa as representative of a firm of Indian lawyers, and arrived in Natal at the end of May 1893. The humiliation and discrimination to which he was at once subjected, because of his nationality and colour, was an experience that changed the course of his life. He resolved to champion the rights of his fellow countrymen in South Africa, victims of prejudice and intolerance.

Sensing in Gandhi a peace-loving but indomitable force, coupled with a lucid, shrewd and inventive mind, they welcomed him. Nor were they mistaken for his promotion of what he conceived to be the public good was bold, steadfast and persevering, yet always attuned to the possibilities of the moment. He knew that discretion was the better part of valour.

In 1894, he proposed the formation of a permanent organization to watch over the interests of Indians. Created the same year, it was named the Natal Indian Congress, after the Indian National Congress.

In 1904, he helped to start a weekly magazine, *Indian Opinion*, at first contributing funds and writing articles. But later he took complete charge and poured all his savings into the venture.

It put a timely weapon in his hand as the situation worsened and the campaign against injustices inflicted on the coloured peoples was intensified.

3. Beginnings of Asceticism and Non-Violence

The centre of the conflict shifted to Johannesburg, and Gandhi's method began to take shape. A Sanskrit word, "*Satyagraha*" (*satya*: truth; *agraha*: firm grasp) was coined for it.

Clashes with the authorities became more serious. Between 1906 and 1914, Gandhi was arrested six times, sentenced to prison four times, and actually kept in jail for more than a year. But he finally triumphed. The principal Indian demands were conceded and confirmed by the Indians' Relief Act in July, 1914, shortly before Gandhi left South Africa.



The Gandhi who had worsted the South African government in a prolonged struggle had meanwhile profoundly transformed his personal and family life, his wife Kasturba having joined him in South Africa in 1896, together with their two young sons and a nephew. Gandhi's private life was now interwoven with his public activities, to which it gave strength and purity, drawing in return encouragement and inspiration.

His longing for a simple ascetic life and his urge to share his existence with the poorest of his fellows led him to forsake the city and its artificialities for the rural, or semi-rural settlements he had founded – the Phoenix and Tolstoy farms – where he was free to practise his bent and gift for teaching.



Left page:

Gandhi in 1899, during the Boer War in South Africa, seen here (X) with members of the Indian Ambulance Corps which he organized and trained.

Photo PIB, New Delhi

On the right:

Gandhi, at 45, shortly before leaving South Africa. For years he had practised a strict personal asceticism, and had forged and successfully applied his method of non-violence. Imprisoned several times in South Africa.

Photo Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad.

4. First Campaign in India: Emancipation of the Untouchables

The First World War broke out when Gandhi was returning to India via London. He landed in Bombay on January 9, 1915, when he was 45. He was already a moderate, non-violent revolutionary, and destined to become still more so. He was a man of uncompromising stands and stern ideals. His search for the absolute often seemed to be a search for the impossible, yet he was always ready to seize any realistic opportunities. He was, in his own words, “a practical idealist”.

Moreover, while eschewing strictly political functions of any kind, he frequently entered the political arena. In his eyes, religion merged imperceptibly into ethics, and ethics into social and political life, and the key to the human problems he wished to solve was often to be found in the realm of state decisions.

After a voyage of reconnaissance across the length and breadth of India, Gandhi founded the Satyagraha Ashram at the gates of Ahmedabad, on May 25, 1915. Like the settlements he had started in South Africa, it was to be a place of retreat where he could teach, plan his campaign, pray, write, and study.



*Gandhi and his wife,
Kasturba,
on their return to India
in 1915*

Photo PIB, New Delhi

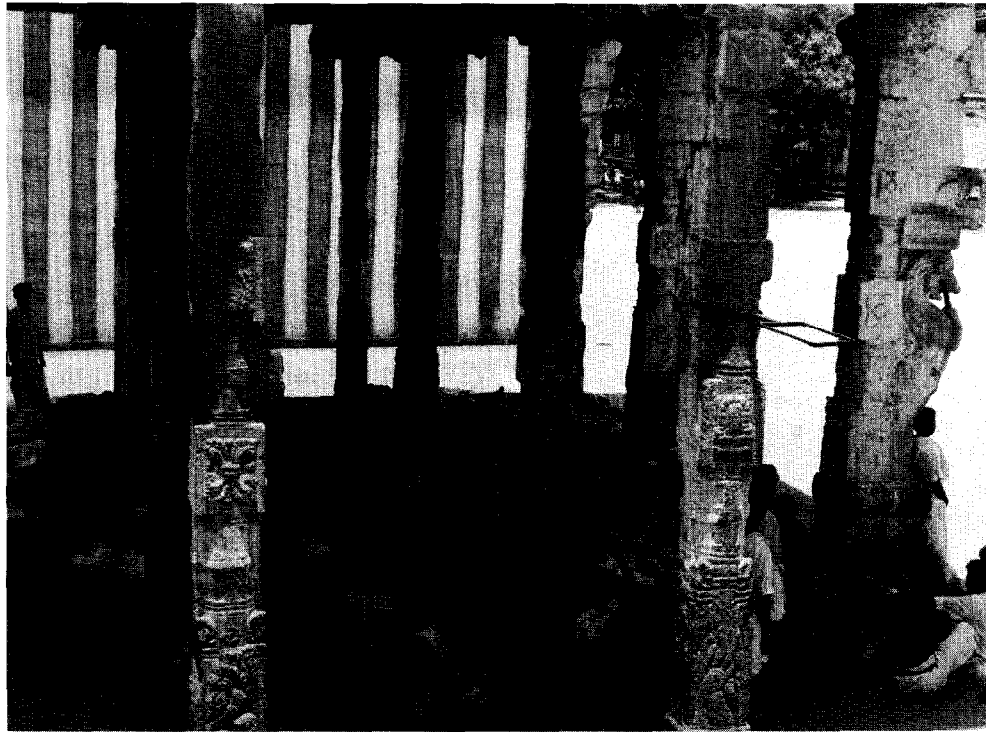
At first the settlement housed about 25 people, men and women of all ages. Some came from the Phoenix and Tolstoy farms in South Africa, others from different parts of India. Gandhi also took in, on an equal footing, a family of Untouchables, which caused trouble within the ashram and raised a storm outside. But otherwise, how could India's foreign masters be required to show respect for human dignity in their dealings with Indians, if the Indians themselves denied it to certain of their own people?

Gandhi thus found himself in open conflict with the traditional organization of Hindu society, the caste system. He approached the question as a moral rather than a social problem.

Gandhi was not basically opposed to the caste system as such. He was aware of the services it had rendered in the past and recognized the value of a social order based on the respective duties of its

Gandhi refused to enter any temple which denied admission to Untouchables. After years of struggle and fasting in support of their emancipation, he saw the ban lifted in hundreds of temples. Photo shows the temple of Madurai in the State of Madras.

Photo Unesco - Cart.



members rather than on the clash between their respective rights. But he never ceased to denounce the abuses, aberrations and harshness that had deformed it. He demanded a radical reform of its principles and practice.

The contempt shown to the Untouchables was particularly abhorrent to him. He found a new name for them: *Harijans* (Children of God). He desired to emancipate and rehabilitate them within the Hindu society which had wronged them. He would be satisfied with nothing less.

In 1915, with the world plunged into war, Gandhi refrained from using Satyagraha as a weapon against the British Empire. The first non-violent campaigns he launched on Indian soil were directed against the indigo planters at Champaran in Bihar, for their abusive treatment of tenant farmers, and against the owners of the Ahmedabad spinning mills whose employees were underpaid and overworked. But Gandhi co-operated with the Empire. By his loyalty and generosity, he hoped to compel the loyalty and generosity of the British people, whom he respected, and indeed loved.

5. Imprisonment, Fasting, Strikes, Mass Demonstration

The years 1918-1919 brought a decisive reversal of Gandhi's policy: co-operation with the Imperial Government in New Delhi gave place to non-co-operation. The immediate cause of the break was the passing of emergency laws that prolonged certain wartime restrictions. Gandhi and some of his followers denounced the laws as unjustified and incompatible with the dignity of free citizens, especially in time of peace.

The new leader of the Indian nationalist movement – for without seeking in any way to be its head, Gandhi was so recognised as such – kept two aims clearly in mind: to maintain at all costs the strictly non-violent nature of his campaign, despite the wavering faith of even staunch disciples and the indiscipline among rank and file; and never to lose sight of the goal of political freedom for India, which, as was now realized, would not readily be granted.

To achieve the first aim, the most determined “civil disobedience” – refusal to bow to injustice or to co-operate with its perpetrators – did not, in Gandhi's view, justify the use of violence. The revindication of legitimate rights through self-sacrifice and self-purification, acceptance of blows and imprisonment, and abstention from all violence to people or property, he affirmed, alone would bring about true, unblemished national independence.

Non-violent strikes, mass demonstrations, fasts of protest took place year after year until the ultimate goal was attained. Between 1918 and 1948, Gandhi undertook at least 15 long fasts: three lasted for 21 days and two he vowed to continue indefinitely – until his death from starvation – if his demands were not met. There were times when the situation eased, but even then Gandhi never relaxed his vigilance.

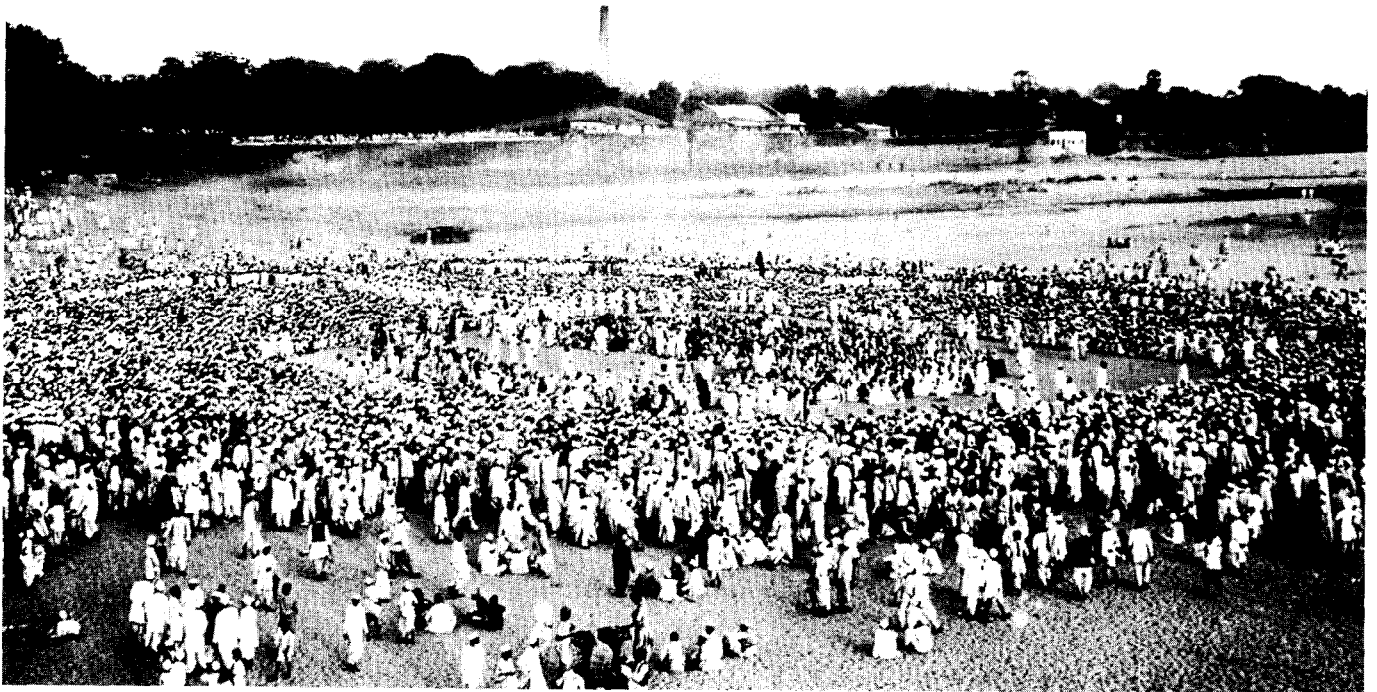
To the Indian National Congress and the entire nation, Gandhi had become a respected leader to whom they gave enthusiastic support. But not everyone understood the absolute necessity of Satyagraha. Gandhi had the courage to disown and even to call a halt, on the brink of victory, to the revolutionary élan of his followers, which was marred by serious violence, in February 1922.

Arrested on many occasions, Gandhi spent more than five years in prison in India and South Africa, went on hunger strikes and led non-violent mass movements throughout India. Here, he visits political prisoners in a jail near Calcutta.

Photo © Snark International



6. Gandhi's Salt March



Although disappointed in his own supporters, and harshly treated by the authorities, the Mahatma never lost heart. Two periodicals, an English language weekly, *Young India*, and *Navajivan* a Gujarati weekly, placed themselves at his disposal. In articles which he wrote for each issue, he explained the true significance of his doctrine and his action: not only to do away with existing wrongs, but to build with patience and devotion a truly just society, in which he himself gave the lead by founding the Village Industries Association and two new ashrams at Wardha and Segaon.

The "Salt March" of 1930 was Gandhi's first great battle in the struggle that was to lead to Indian independence.

On March 12, he left the village of Sabarmati (left) and, for 24 days, trekked on foot (right) the 240 miles to the west coast at Dandi, his followers soon swelling to many thousands.

At Dandi, he picked up some sea salt in a symbolic gesture, encouraging all Indians to defy the British salt monopoly laws. This action recalls the incident in the American struggle for independence, when the citizens of Boston in 1773 protested British taxation without representation by throwing whole cargoes of tea from British ships into the harbour. Gandhi was one asked by Lord Irwin, Viceroy of India, to have a cup of tea during a conference. "Thank you", said Gandhi, taking a paper bag from a fold in his shawl, "I will put some of this salt into my tea to remind us of the famous Boston Tea Party".

Photo PIB, New Delhi



Outstanding events not yet mentioned were the declaration of the "War of Independence" on March 12, 1930, followed immediately by the famous "salt march", and inspired protest against the government salt monopoly, regarded as a symbol of oppression; Gandhi's part in the Round Table Conference (London, 1931); his extended fasts on behalf of the Untouchables (1932-33); and his approval of the 1937 provincial elections.

7. “Quit India!”

During the Second World War, India wished to share in the war effort, on a strictly equal footing with the Dominions. Gandhi was at first inclined, as in 1914-18, not to oppose the arming of the country, but government policy caused him to change his views. In October 1940, he launched a campaign of civil, non-violent resistance to participation in the war. On July 14, 1942, Congress voted a resolution calling on the British to quit India.

In 1942, Gandhi and other Indian leaders were arrested for having openly called on the British to quit India. Gandhi's watchword remained “non-violence”, but peaceful demonstrations by his followers were broken up with tear gas bombs.

Photo PIB, New Delhi



At the end of the war, negotiations were resumed between the British authorities and the Indian nationalists, with Gandhi playing a decisive, though unofficial part. On August 15, 1947, India acceded to full independence.

But the conflict between Hindus and Muslims, often stifled but always latent, flared up again at the moment with tragic consequences.



8. An Assassin's Bullet

The Moslem League would not accept the idea of the powerful Islamic minority – about a quarter of the population – being governed by the Hindu majority.

Sick at heart, Gandhi and his companions had to agree to the “vivisection” of the country, and August 15, 1947, marked both the liberation of India, vainly imagined to be “indivisible”, and its partition into two separate nations: the Indian Union and Pakistan.

These hopes and disappointments were accompanied by a tragic sequence of riots, violence and brutality. Gandhi, who had always worked for understanding between the two communities, was tormented by the setback to his efforts. He would not stand by while evil stalked the land and, although aged 77, he set out on foot across the areas ravaged by misery and hatred to act as peacemaker, well knowing that his life was a target for fanaticism.

On January 30, 1948, an extremist Hindu who could not understand Gandhi's chivalrous attitude to the Muslims remaining in the Indian Union, and regarded him as a traitor, shot him dead. Thus Gandhi paid to the cause of non-violence, which he upheld as a universal ideal within the reach of all, the supreme sacrifice of his own life.



At 77, Gandhi went barefooted from village to village in the regions ravaged by conflict between Hindu and Muslim. The day of Indian independence, Gandhi was in no mood for jubilation. He fasted and worked for peace between the two communities.

Photo PIB, New Delhi



New Delhi, January 30, 1948: on the spot where Gandhi has been shot only a few moments before, his companion and Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru breaks the news of his death to a hushed crowd.

Photo © H. Cartier-Bresson



*Mahatma Gandhi
Memorial Lecture*

12 June 1995

Gandhi
in the Global Village

Welcome Address

Federico Mayor
Director-General of UNESCO

Welcome Speech

Mrs Françoise de Panafieu
Minister of Tourism, Republic of France

Gandhi in the Global Village

P.V. Narasimha Rao
Prime Minister of India

Welcome Address

Federico Mayor

Director-General of UNESCO



Mr Prime Minister,
Madam Minister,
Excellencies,
Colleagues,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a very great honour and pleasure for me to welcome your Excellency, Mr Prime Minister, to UNESCO House to deliver the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture on the occasion of the 125th Anniversary of his birth. Over the half-century of its existence, UNESCO has had the privilege of being addressed by a number of outstanding Indian personalities – Dr. Radhakrishnan, Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, Maulana Abul Kalam Azad, Indira Gandhi, Rajiv Gandhi. In this year of anniversaries, we are delighted to add another distinguished name to this list and to greet you warmly as a proven friend of UNESCO. I also wish to take this opportunity to pay tribute to the people of India for all those qualities that have made their country the world's largest democracy – and, in particular, to the women of India, who in so many ways embody its spirit.

Speaking in 1956 to the tenth General Conference of UNESCO held in New Delhi, Prime Minister Nehru referred to the “hunger for peace of the peoples of the world” which had brought the United Nations into being. Quoting the preamble to UNESCO’s

*Woman is the companion of man,
gifted with equal mental capacities.*

MAHATMA GANDHI



Constitution, he said that just as the UN General Assembly was intended to represent “the political will of the world community” so UNESCO “might be said to represent the conscience of the world community”. Conscience and a commitment to moral values were essential to attaining “the objectives of international peace and of the common welfare of mankind”.

Today, as we celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the adoption of UNESCO’s Constitution along with the founding of the United Nations, it is clearer than ever that peace is more than simply a matter of “political and economic arrangements between governments” and that peace must “be founded if it is not to fail, upon the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind”. Promoting such solidarity – in a world where so many continue to hunger in vain for peace, freedom, justice, equality and dignity – remains a mission of supreme importance.

In this anniversary year, we all need to reflect on the institutional shortcomings that limit the international community’s capacity to deal with the problems confronting it. But if we are to move closer towards realizing the ideals proclaimed in the name of the “peoples of the United Nations,” it is essential that “WE the peoples” play our full part in the pursuit of those ideals. One of our first responsibilities – identified as such in the Charter of the United Nations

*My religion has no geographical limits.
If I have a living faith in it,
it will transcend my love for India herself.
Isolated independence is not the goal
of the world states.
It is voluntary interdependence.
There is not limit to extending our services
to our neighbours across State-made frontiers.
God never made those frontiers.*

MAHATMA GANDHI



— is “to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours”. To highlight this minimum condition of human solidarity, 1995 was declared *United Nations Year for Tolerance* on the initiative of UNESCO. As lead agency for the Year, UNESCO is currently co-ordinating a world-wide programme of seminars, concerts, publications, and exhibitions as well as educational activities on the theme of tolerance.

Only last month I attended a major regional conference on this subject in New Delhi where you, Sir, underlined your own and India’s strong and consistent support for this important undertaking.

It is a happy coincidence that the Year for Tolerance should be celebrated at the same time as the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi, who embodied the spirit of tolerance. This was inherent in his philosophy and practice of non-violence, in his vision of all human beings as engaged in a search for a Truth that transcended them. Gandhiji was a nationalist but he was neither parochial nor chauvinist. He was the practitioner of a universal religion that respected all cultures. What he had to say about the interaction between diverse cultures aptly sums up the message of UNESCO: “I do not wish my house to be walled on all sides and my windows stuffed. I want the cultures of all lands to be blown about my house as freely as possible. But I refuse to be blown off

my feet by any.” Gandhiji’s tireless quest to attain the universal through the individual – recalling a central theme in the writings of his great contemporary Rabindranath Tagore – has made him a spiritual pathfinder to a new millennium.

Gandhi is a vital source of inspiration wherever men and women seek to oppose violence and injustice by mobilizing their fellow beings in support of a larger vision of unity. His thought was at the heart of Martin Luther King’s civil rights campaign in the United States. Nelson Mandela has spoken of Gandhi’s “incalculable influence” on the history of South Africa. In recognition of his seminal contribution to the growth of a culture of peace, UNESCO has this year struck an anniversary Mahatma Gandhi medal bearing the inscription: *“In the midst of darkness, light prevails”*. It has organized this lecture today to explore and highlight Gandhi’s relevance in our world of multiple transitions.

Who better to deliver this lecture in memory of Mahatma Gandhi than Prime Minister Narasimha Rao? He is a politician and statesman whose breadth of experience is matched only by the range of his interests. In a political career spanning almost half a century, he has served as General Secretary of the All-India Congress Committee, as Chief Minister of the Andhra Pradesh State Government, successively as Union Minister of External Affairs, Home Affairs, Defence, Human Resource Development, and – again – External Affairs; and since 1991, as Prime Minister of India. Scholar and translator of classical texts from, and into, the Telugu language, his interests range from international relations, political thought, languages, literature, music and informatics to Indian philosophy and culture. He is a long-standing disciple of Mahatma Gandhi.

The hallmark of Narasimha Rao’s political career has been his concern with social justice and social harmony and his commitment to education as a means to their attainment. As Minister of Human Resource Development, he was instrumental in formulating the National Education Policy in 1986. As Prime Minister he has placed education at the centre of national development strategy. I wish

*A truly religious person
becomes a citizen of the world.*

MAHATMA GANDHI



here to pay a personal tribute to Your Excellency for the strong support you have given to the Education for All process launched at Jomtien in 1990 and for the decision announced in December 1993 at the New Delhi Summit of the Nine “Giants” to increase the proportion of India’s GNP devoted to education from 3.6 to 6 per cent. You have acted upon your belief – of what you spoke to me at our last meeting in New Delhi – that without education nothing of value can happen. You have helped through your enlightened leadership to signpost the path to peace and progress in the years ahead.

The events of this century have all too often justified the disenchanted comment of the French poet Charles Péguy: *“Tout commence en mystique et finit en politique”* [Everything begins in mysticism and ends in politics]. Yet, I am convinced that, through educational empowerment and the example of exceptional beings such as Mahatma Gandhi, we can succeed in infusing values and spirituality into our political mores. The process may be slow, almost geological, but I believe in the power of the spirit to shape our common future. If I may quote some words I myself wrote in a contribution to a special edition of *Indian Horizons* to mark the anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi’s birth:

Drop by drop, drop by drop, the water's force – gentle, flexible, persistent – pierces the rock, the sturdiest pillar yields to the steady liquid thrust We shall go forward together, all different, travellers on the road towards bright dawns, armed only with the force of our ideals, with the indomitable will to conquer by inventing new pathways and with songs of peace on our lips. Without rancour, but indocile because the hour of the rebellion of the spirit has arrived.

I think I have said enough by way of presentation, and I am now perhaps anticipating what you yourself may wish to say on Gandhiji. I shall, therefore conclude by thanking you once again for being with us at UNESCO and sharing with us your thoughts on one of the truly great figures of our – or any – century.

Welcome Speech

Françoise de Panafieu

Minister of Tourism, Republic of France



Mr Prime Minister,
Mr Director-General,
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is for me a great honour to represent the President of the Republic and to address you today when UNESCO is celebrating the 125th anniversary of the birth of Mahatma Gandhi. By a happy coincidence, UNESCO celebrates this year its fifty years of existence – fifty years that have been entirely devoted to bridge the gap between peoples and cultures. This universal mission of UNESCO is reflected today by its wish to pay homage to a person who has also become universal because of the values of tolerance that he imparted to all of us. The conjunction of this celebration with that of the United Nations Year for Tolerance is particularly opportune.

We know that neither tolerance nor freedom can be had without effort; for these, we have to make efforts every day. Tolerance is not a luxury which is automatically enjoyed by the citizens of democratic countries. It is reinforced by the fundamental principles of democracy that were dear to Mahatma Gandhi.

After his last fast in January 1948 to bring unity among the Indian communities and just few days before his assassination, Mahatma Gandhi had expressed the following thought in regard to tolerance: "Several people did me a great favour by assuring me

*An eye for an eye only
ends up making the whole world blind.*

MAHATMA GANDHI



that all the Hindus, Sikhs, Muslims, Christians, Parsees, and Jews will live together as brothers, and that the members of these communities will never be hostile to one another; this is not a small matter. This means that we must assure ourselves that from now on all the people who inhabit India will live as brothers because, after all, we are all leaves of the same tree". After his last fast, having received a large number of letters wishing him a long life, Mahatma Gandhi spoke about his wish to devote the rest of his life to the service of his people, and he conjured up a perspective to live for 125 years. It is that anniversary that we celebrate today, the anniversary of the man who was first called by his people a "grand soul", and afterwards called affectionately "grand father", and the Indians call him today in view of the struggle he fought for the creation of a free and modern India, "the Father of the Nation".

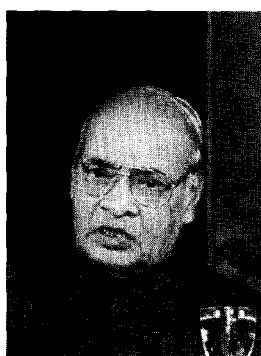
Mr Prime Minister, let me tell you that for the Government of France and the President of the Republic, whom I have the privilege to represent today, it is a great honour to receive you in France, and I am happy to sit near you and to express all the regard and all the admiration which the Government and the people of France have for you.

Mahatma Gandhi Memorial Lecture

Gandhi in the Global Village

P.V. Narasimha Rao

Prime Minister of India



It gives me great pleasure to speak before this distinguished gathering about the life, work, and vision of Mahatma Gandhi – the tallest Indian of the twentieth century – when we are commemorating his 125th birth anniversary here at UNESCO. Gandhiji is one among very select group of truly eminent world leaders in our century. The theme of this lecture, *Gandhi in the Global Village*, is appropriate to this conjuncture and to this forum. It gives me an opportunity to reappraise the relevance of the Gandhian legacy to the people of India, and the relevance of the Mahatma's vision to the future of humanity.

It is appropriate that UNESCO should celebrate the Mahatma's 125th birth anniversary as an event of world-wide significance. Gandhi can well be described as truly the greatest theorist and practitioner of non-violence and tolerance of our times. He sought to awaken a novel moral consciousness in humankind. It is, therefore, natural that thinkers of sensitivity and distinction throughout the world should reflect upon what he said, and how he acted, in order to gain a fuller understanding of his discourse and its implications for the future, as the humanity approaches a new millennium.

The founding Charter of UNESCO places upon it a profound responsibility in promoting creative interaction between different cultures and world-views, just as it also placed upon this Organization the responsibility of bringing the people of the world together in mutual understanding and in peaceful coexistence. The Constitution of UNESCO states that "since wars begin in the minds of men,

it is in the minds of men that the defences of peace must be constructed.” This is a sentiment entirely Gandhian in letter and spirit. Gandhi believed that it is the violence and conflict in the minds of people that lay at the very roots of anguish and discord of our times. For this reason, he argued that once the minds are freed from thoughts of violence and conflict, not only individuals and communities within nations, but also nations within the world community, could come together in creative endeavour.

I am deeply conscious of the fact that we are meeting today in this beautiful city of Paris, which occupies a distinctive place in philosophical reflection and in humanist thought in the contemporary world. I am, therefore, encouraged to raise some basic questions about the human condition. When we turn to the fundamental issues of our times – the questions of war and peace in the nuclear age; the problems of production and distribution in a post-modern era; and the globalization of economic and information systems, which have at once combined as well as segregated a variety of identities – then the need for discourses that address themselves to these questions and find imaginative answers to them becomes compelling. I believe that those engaged in reflection on these issues will profit greatly by examining Gandhian thought and action. The content and range of the ideas expressed by the Mahatma, no less than his translation of those ideas into practice, are indeed remarkable in many ways.

In any exploration of the seminal ideas generated by Mahatma Gandhi, and the courses of action he embarked upon, it would be profitable to recall the cultural milieu in which Gandhi was born, in 1869, and the influences, Indian and Western, which shaped his mind as he reached adulthood. Gandhi was born in the state of Gujarat in western India that has, since time immemorial, looked across the waters of the Arabian Sea to West Asia and beyond, to the European world. The Gandhi family was a family of status; the future Mahatma’s father pursued the liberal vocation of civil service in a small principality.

The third quarter of the nineteenth century was an era in which India was fully drawn into the imperial system of Great Britain. It is not surprising that this integration adversely affected not only her material and economic condition but also her social and political

condition. Yet the colonial situation can best be understood as a situation of dialectical complexity; the subversion of the economy and the cultural fabric of India was accompanied by a certain measure of regeneration, in the spheres of social production and intellectual reflection.

While the epicentres of political and economic activity in colonial India, namely, the port cities of Bombay, Madras, and Calcutta, witnessed to the full the impact of colonial rule, the remote towns of Porbandar and Rajkot in Gujarat – where the young Gandhi grew up – remained largely indigenous in content and texture. The cultural impact of the West was even more marginal. Indeed, the emotional and intellectual consciousness of young Gandhi, and the notion of *sacred* and *profane* in his being were largely shaped by the saints of devotional Hinduism. These saints wrote lyrical poetry of deep compassion and profound spiritual content that linked, for centuries, the sensibility of successive generations of Gujaratis. Gandhi's autobiographical writings reveal the special impact which one of these saints – Narasingh Mehta – made upon his consciousness. A composition by this saint, notwithstanding the loss of its literary flavour in translation, conveys the social and moral concerns central to that devotional theism. This is what he says:

He is a *Vaishnava* who identifies himself with the sorrow of others
And in doing so has no pride about him
Such a one respects everyone and speaks ill of none
He labours neither under infatuation nor delusion
Narasaiyo says: His presence purifies his surroundings.

These and similar values of devotional Hinduism were manifest in the Gandhi household through the intense religiosity of his mother, Putlibai. This created in the psyche of young Gandhi a sensitivity to matters of the spirit – indeed, a quality of existential immersion in religious concerns – which later blossomed into a powerful force behind the adult Gandhi's intervention in social, political and economic affairs. But, the influence of saintly poets like Narasingh Mehta was not the only influence upon the Gandhi household. The commercial communities of Western India, in

*We must respect other religions
even as we respect our own.
Mere tolerance thereof is not enough.*

MAHATMA GANDHI



pursuit of an eclecticism so characteristic of the Hindus were also deeply drawn to the metaphysical principles of Jainism. The Jain way of life rested upon a calculus of austere rationality, underpinned by a belief in the non-exclusivity of truth, or *anekantavada*. Belief in this principle enabled a Jain to extend a sympathetic consideration to points of view other than one's own. Indeed, the remarkable capacity of Jainism profoundly influenced Gandhi's later career as he led various movements in South Africa and in India.

Gandhi's journey as a young student to the great metropolis of London, to pursue studies in law, brought him into the very heart of world culture. The initial shock experienced by the young Gujarati in London was formidable. He was, however, soon at ease in his new surroundings. He combined the study of law with the exploration of Western culture. This speaks volumes of his resilience, inner strength, and self-confidence. In England, the influences of his childhood interacted with the new situation and enriched his intellectual and philosophical experience. Apart from the classics of Hindu and Buddhist literature, he also read some of the seminal Christian texts. Further, the social and economic consequences of industrialization made tremendous impression on his sensitive mind; and probably played a vital role in shaping his attitude towards industrial societies as a whole. After completing his studies,

Gandhiji returned to Gujarat, still committed to the notion of making his mark in life as a lawyer.

Gandhi had barely returned to India, when legal business took him to Pretoria in 1893. South Africa, at that juncture, was a polity where a bigoted white community was taking the first steps towards the construction of apartheid. The gross inequalities to which coloured and black residents were subjected touched Gandhi to the quick, and apart from attending to legal business, he entered public life in order to combat racial discrimination.

The racial conflict in South Africa, in the last decade of the nineteenth century, exercised a profound influence upon Gandhi. On the one hand, he reached out to public activity in order to redress the situation. On the other, he set upon an interior journey of moral exploration that was destined to make his life a quest for self-realization, as well as an epic struggle against racial discrimination and political subjugation in Africa and Asia. Gandhiji later observed of his sojourn in South Africa:

Here it was that the religious force within me became a living force. I had gone to South Africa ... for gaining my own livelihood. But... I found myself in search of God and striving for self-realisation.

Gandhi's anguish at the state of South Africa prompted him to widen his religious and philosophical education through a critical reading of texts other than those of Hinduism and Jainism. He also reached out to figures like John Ruskin, the Christian socialist, and Leo Tolstoy, the Russian novelist and philosopher, who sought to apply the principles of Christianity to the day-to-day problems of human existence. From Ruskin, Gandhi imbibed the value of the dignity of labour – manual or intellectual; and from Tolstoy he gained an understanding of how love and compassion could change humanity for the better. Although Gandhiji delved deep into the religious and philosophical literature of the West, this exploration largely brought out the original faiths ingrained in him. As an eminent scholar of classical India, Professor A. L. Basham has put it, Gandhi's ideas were:

fully in keeping with Indian tradition, and were probably developed from notions which he absorbed in his contact with the West... His genius was even more successful than that of earlier reformers in harmonizing non-Indian ideas with the Hindu Dharma, and giving them a thoroughly Indian character; and he did this by relating them to earlier doctrines or concepts.

The instinctive relationship which Gandhi sought to establish between social and moral action needs to be spelt out a little because the illuminating light it throws upon his development as a political actor in South Africa; upon his epic role, slightly later, in the liberation of India; and upon the promise which Gandhian discourse holds out for the possible resolution of the problems which haunt humanity towards the end of the twentieth century.

Despite assessments to the contrary, it seems reasonable to hold that the political actor in Gandhi was, throughout his long career, subordinate to the moral actor. The Mahatma was ultimately concerned with individual and collective salvation, rather than with purely mundane matters. The fires that raged within Gandhi can best be sensed in his own words:

The politician in me has never dominated a single decision of mine, and if I seem to take part in politics, it is only because politics encircles us today like the coils of a snake from which one cannot get out, no matter how much one tries. I wish, therefore, to wrestle with the snake ... Quite selfishly, as I wish to live in peace in the midst of a bellowing storm howling around me, I have been experimenting with myself and my friends by introducing religion into politics. Let me explain what I mean by religion. It is not the Hindu religion ... but the religion ... which binds one indissolubly to the truth within and which ever purifies.

This creative synthesis, flowing from a fusion of Gandhi's moral anguish with his social concerns as a political actor, is reflected eloquently in a novel and revolutionary mode of political action known to us as *Satyagraha*, or soul-force, which he first crafted in South Africa.

The context in which *Satyagraha* was developed as a political weapon needs to be highlighted. In 1906, the Government of Transvaal enacted legislation which required Indians to register themselves as residents, thus denying to them their natural rights as citizens of the British Empire. To protest this 'Black Act', Gandhiji organized a meeting in Johannesburg. The Mahatma had contemplated the adoption of a resolution encouraging Indians in South Africa to resist discriminatory legislation. However, what was designed as conventional protest against an unjust law, acquired a unique significance when a participant declared, in the name of God, that he would never submit to that law and advised all present to do likewise. Protesting is one thing and deciding to resist the law is quite another. A world of difference exists between the two. People spontaneously decided, at that meeting, to resist the law. In focusing upon the heightened moral import of the resolution, Gandhi pointed out that it had become something of the highest significance: "Everyone must search his own heart and if the inner voice assures him that he has the requisite strength to carry him through, then only should he pledge himself and then only will his pledge bear fruit". This thought he repeated several times during the Indian freedom movement.

Thus was born *Satyagraha* as a weapon for fighting untruth and oppression in the world. As spelt out over time by Gandhi, there were distinct features to the moral code of the true *satyagrahi*: he believed that truth could have more than one facet; he further assumed that the conscience of his adversary could be touched and transformed through non-violent protest. Times without number Gandhiji said: "I have no hatred for the British, I have no hatred for the Englishmen. I have no hatred for any one. They are all human beings. What I protest against is the system and what they are doing to the Indian people." This is how he differentiated between protest against the system and hatred against those who were perpetuating that system. Most important of all, Gandhi believed that no truthful contest ever yielded a victor and a vanquished; instead, the reconciliation that followed any *Satyagraha* brought the former adversaries together in a firm bond of friendship underpinned by their spiritual upliftment.

*For my own part,
I do not want the freedom of India
if it means extinction of England
or the disappearance of Englishmen.
I want the freedom of my country
so that other countries may learn something
from my free country,
so that the resources of my country might be
utilized for the benefit of mankind.*

MAHATMA GANDHI
Speech in Calcutta in 1915



As a youngster I was very much affected – in fact, influenced – by the anti-British agitation in India. I can tell you that but for this very restraining influence of Mahatma Gandhi on our lives, on our actions, we could have become violent. I cannot imagine what could have happened to my generation because we were in the thick of the struggle as students, as young people, and later on as participants in the struggle. Mahatma Gandhi laid particular emphasis on the *right means* in order to get the *right ends*. This was the influence that many of us had on us. Those who did not yield to these influences, or did not obey the Gandhian principles, went their different ways. But that is a different story.

The potency of *Satyagraha*, the novel instrument of political protest devised by Gandhi, was reflected in the substantial gains that he was able to secure for the Indian community in South Africa before he left for India in 1914. General J.C. Smuts, who negotiated a settlement with Gandhi was, therefore, delighted when he learnt of the Mahatma's departure for his homeland. "The saint has left our shores", Smuts observed, "I sincerely hope forever". There was another sequel to the struggle against racial discrimination which Gandhi had waged in South Africa earlier in the century. The black community and its leaders too, remembered the power of non-violence; and despite the brutal authority characterized by the regime of apartheid, they ultimately triumphed over it through a

*I seek entirely to blunt the edge
of the tyrant's sword,
not by putting up against it
a sharper edged weapon,
but by disappointing his expectation
that I would be offering
physical resistance.*

MAHATMA GANDHI
Young India, October 8, 1925



non-violent yet militant struggle. When President Nelson Mandela visited Delhi in 1990, he referred to the Gandhian legacy in South Africa and said, "We have since been influenced by his [that is, Gandhi's] perception and tradition of non-violent struggle".

When Gandhi returned to India in 1914, after an interval of two decades, he noticed enormous changes in the country's political scene. By the second decade of the twentieth century, the middle classes in the subcontinent were fully drawn into a nationalist stance, ideologically and organizationally. Between the upper middle classes on the one hand, and the relatively less well-off peasants, artisans and workers, on the other, stood a great gulf of wealth and consciousness that was difficult to bridge through the conventional mechanisms of modern politics. The colonial State had exploited those who laboured in the fields and factories much more than it had exploited the middle classes. Yet, the nationalism of the well-to-do was articulate and organized, while the nationalism of the poor and deprived lacked organization and modern ideology. Indeed, the poor could only voice their anguish through seemingly spontaneous and localized upsurges that were suppressed forthwith by the colonial State. Even in the nineteenth century, there had been several small and big uprisings in the tribal areas against the exploitation by British-backed feudals. Some of them continued for many years, but eventually all of them collapsed under the weight of superior

weapons and deeper intrigues to divide the tribals. So, in the beginning decades of the twentieth century, the question of linking the anguish of the deprived classes with the aspirations of the middle classes in a purposeful and mass-based nationalism remained mostly unanswered.

When Gandhi addressed himself to the Indian situation in 1914, he chose as his base the Ashram, or the spiritual retreat, as an institution ideally suited to the work he had in view. His dialogue with the middle classes, at that juncture, confirmed his view that these classes were united in the desire for liberation from colonial bondage. Within the span of a few years, he further discovered that the peasants, artisans and workers, too, saw the overthrow of British rule as an essential requirement of their material and spiritual welfare. Since it was difficult to reach these classes through the idiom of modern politics, liberal or radical, Gandhi took recourse to popular religious imagery as a potent means to rally the poor to the cause of nationalism and, at the same time, to heighten the level of their social consciousness. He deliberately built closer identification with the poor and down-trodden by adopting their half-naked clothing and hut-dwelling way of life. This is one of the most remarkable things about Gandhi. He said if the millions of the country do not have clothes enough to cover their bodies then he will also wear only a small dhoti, and not even a shirt. This gesture of his led to a genuine mingling of hearts and minds and had a lasting effect. In this process, he discovered an untapped reservoir of popular energy that he harnessed into agitations, based upon the principles of *Satyagraha*.

The initial Gandhian experiments in *Satyagraha* in India were on a small scale. They aimed at resolving the grievances of specific groups of peasants and workers. They, however, also expanded their political horizons. When World War I came to an end, in which the people of India had extended substantial support to Great Britain, Gandhi embarked upon a movement of *Satyagraha* involving India as a whole. Perhaps it is not so well known that during the first World War it was Gandhiji himself who advocated full support to the British against the advice of most of his advisers, followers, and colleagues. They believed that that was the time when they could



Photo Margaret Bourke-White, *Life Magazine* © Time Inc.

ask for full independence from the British Government and make it a condition for India's participation in the war. Gandhiji rejected their plea saying that the time was not proper to ask "for our pound of flesh". "Let us first co-operate, let us first help the British", he said. But after the World War came to an end, it was the other side that breached the promise; as a result, Gandhiji started his *Satyagraha* movement. Indeed, in a span of three decades, Gandhi initiated a number of nation-wide protests with two strategic purposes in view: first, to knit together the different social, linguistic and religious communities within India into modern nationhood; and second, to demonstrate to the British that their empire over South Asia would have to be dismantled at the earliest.

I had a good fortune to observe, as a young boy, these *Satyagraha* movements. Something out of this world, something you could not possibly imagine. A new kind of movement he created in the whole length and breadth of the country with nothing like the modern gadgets that we have today. All the means of information were in the hands of the British Government. Nothing in our hands, nothing in Gandhiji's hands. Even then, from Kashmir to Kanyakumari, from one end of the country to the other, it was the same spirit of nationalism, the spirit of revolt, the spirit of asking the British to quit India, and the spirit of gaining independence. It was something of a miracle.

The nation-wide *Satyagraha* campaigns waged by Gandhi rank among the biggest popular mobilizations in the history of humankind. I have touched upon the moral content of *Satyagraha* at its moment of birth in South Africa in 1906. When we relate *Satyagraha* in South Africa to *Satyagraha* in India, it would be appropriate to evoke the social dimensions of the latter. The population of India, at that time, was approximately 400 million. Roughly 75 per cent of this population lived in the villages. This was the constituency which Gandhi sought to draw into nationalist politics through satyagrahi action. To say that he fully succeeded in doing so would, of course, be untrue. However, the flag of nationalism was firmly planted by Gandhi in every substantial village in India; and in every village of any size a dozen or more peasant households were actively drawn into the orbit of the struggle. The

demographic scale of the nationalist movement was breathtaking, since it literally mobilized 10 per cent of the nation, that is, about 40 million persons, in non-violent action against the greatest imperial power of that period. It succeeded splendidly because it was non-violent. It was very easy for the British Government to put down anything violent, but they just did not know what to do with this non-violent movement sweeping village after village throughout the country.

Perhaps the dextrous artistry of *satyagrahi* action and the ingenious manner in which symbolic action, backed by rudimentary organization, drew tens upon millions across the land into movements of resistance is poignantly captured by the Dandi March of 1930. The movement was directed against a tax on salt, which affected adversely even the poorest peasant household in India. To signify his disapproval of the tax on salt, Gandhi selected a small band of devoted followers, 79 in all, representing different sections of Indian society. The Mahatma and his *satyagrahis* marched from Ahmedabad, in Western India, to a village called Dandi, on the Arabian Sea. By traversing 241 miles in measured marches over a period of a few weeks, Gandhi and his gallant band of *satyagrahis* united a nation of 400 million against the British Empire. As they went along, the crowds swelled and swelled and it became absolutely unmanageable when they reached Dandi.

The incredible economy of Gandhian action, the inverse relationship between the scale of *Satyagraha* and the demographic momentum of popular arousal, illustrate the tactical genius of the Mahatma. Indeed, the cost-effectiveness of the "Short March"—as I would like to describe the trek from Ahmedabad to Dandi in the modern parlance—demonstrates the superiority of *satyagrahi* action over conventional modes of political protest, constitutional or violent. And the crowning feature of that action was, of course, that it was unarmed and non-violent, and, therefore, repression and suppression-proof.

Despite the massive and countrywide dimensions of the movement, its absolute discipline and restraint were remarkable. Gandhi believed firmly in the purity of the means and in the immutable correspondence between ends and means. He suspended a country-

wide *Satyagraha* movement abruptly on a single incident of violence committed by the people at a place called Chowri Chowra in the State of Uttar Pradesh¹. So widespread was the disappointment and so deep and genuine resentment on this suspension that even Jawaharlal Nehru expressed his serious reservation on the Mahatma's decision. But Gandhi stuck to his guns and asserted that the means adopted in any *Satyagraha* movement must invariably be non-violent. The movement was suspended but the message registered indelibly in the minds of the people.

The triumph of non-violent protest over racial discrimination in South Africa, or colonial domination in South Asia, does not exhaust the creative potential of *Satyagraha* as an instrument of revolutionary action and social transformation. Indeed, in its depth and comprehensiveness, Gandhian thought and action reach out to life in all its rich diversity: to questions of social production and the distribution of wealth; to the nexus between the state, civil society, and the citizen; to the manner in which the basic unit of society, namely the family, relates to the individual, on the one hand, and to the social order, on the other; and last, but not the least, to the character of the sacred and the profane as a guide to human beings in their journey across life to the worlds that lie beyond. The sheer range of Gandhian thought and practice, therefore, makes it one of the richest sources of reflection and guide to action today, across the decades that separate us from the vibrant and living truth of the Mahatma. Its only limitations are those inherent in the society and the state. But who, except God, is immune to limitations?

Any inquiry into the contemporary relevance of *satyagrahi* thought and practice should locate itself in Gandhiji's understanding of non-violence, no less than in his understanding of social power as the basis of political action. The Mahatma repeatedly observed that non-violence, in his view, was the weapon of the strong rather than of the weak; just as it was also a weapon that drew victor and vanquished into a common association of reconciliation and moral

1 It was then called, United Provinces (U.P.); the abbreviation is still retained for the State though its name has been changed after independence to Uttar Pradesh, meaning Northern State.

regeneration. Gandhi's concept of power was of a piece with his understanding of non-violence. Not surprisingly, he looked askance at the power which grew out of the barrel of the gun, or rested upon the ephemeral calculus of wealth. For the Mahatma, the most legitimate form of power came through welding together popular aspirations and the life of truth into a movement of social transformation and moral upliftment. The struggles which he set in motion in South Africa, and later in India, were excellent examples of the aggregation of non-violent power and its use in the social and political domain for the good of the people.

What are the likely, possible, and desirable arenas of *satyagrahi* action in our times? Since we are located in an age, when the complete annihilation of human civilization through weapons of mass destruction continues to be a possibility, it is relevant to ask whether the Mahatma's concept of conflict resolution has any role to play in relations between sovereign nations as well as those between different sections within the nation. At the risk of touching upon a theme that may appear parochial yet has a world-wide potential that needs to be explored, I would contend that the Gandhian sense of power profoundly influenced the foreign policy of India after independence in 1947. This policy, as is well known, sought to bring together the newly liberated nations of Asia, Africa, and Latin America – with their common memory of domination – on a common platform to confer self-confidence upon polities that lacked the sinews of conventional strength in the post-World War-II era.

As classically formulated, Non-Alignment probably assumes a different significance from the one it had in the third quarter of our century. But as a principle of equity and sanity, which enabled the developing nations to speak with a voice of dignity in the fora of the world, Non-Alignment is as relevant today as it was when it was enunciated. Although the Non-Aligned Movement took shape in 1962, the concept predated Indian independence. The principle was clearly enunciated in a resolution of the Working Committee of the Indian National Congress in 1946. Yet in relating Gandhian principles to the conduct of world affairs, I want to go beyond Non-Alignment, to touch upon the vital issue of nuclear disarmament in

our times. Indeed, our deep commitment to Gandhian values, as a nation which looks up to the Mahatma as its most eminent citizen in the twentieth century, is eloquently reflected in the proposal which India initiated in 1988, for a phased and universal programme of nuclear disarmament. Rajiv Gandhi articulated this vision to rid the world of nuclear weapons at the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly on Disarmament. As heirs to Mahatma Gandhi, we look upon our proposal for universal nuclear disarmament as Gandhian in spirit, just as we look upon it as a measure that can make the world a safer place for generations yet to come. Since UNESCO is dedicated to the promotion of world peace, I take this opportunity to reiterate the outline of this essentially Gandhian proposal for universal nuclear disarmament. I commend this proposal before the men and women of scholarship assembled here in the conviction that they will so influence world opinion that the dream of universal nuclear disarmament will become a reality within a finite, stipulated time.

The question of nuclear disarmament is only one of the issues on the agenda of *satyagrahi* action in our times. No less significant are issues relating to the generation of wealth between, and within, nations in the world community; or questions pertaining to the articulation of local and regional identities within existing polities; and finally, to the vulnerability of the Nation-State itself, in the face of emerging supranational regional organizations and changing technological and information systems. I shall touch upon these problems separately, with a view to locating them within the Gandhian discourse. I shall also try to draw from the Gandhian discourse, possible lines of solution to these problems.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to dwell upon the question of wealth generation and its distribution, in the first instance. There is a widespread yet erroneous belief, within India as well as outside India, that Gandhi lacked a full understanding of industrial societies; and that he may have been dismissive about the increasing pace and impact of industrialization in the twentieth century. Nothing could be farther from the truth. As a student of law in London, Gandhi explored industrialization in Great Britain intensively and set out his understanding of this phenomenon in a work called

Hind Swaraj. The Mahatma's quarrel was not with industrialization as such but with situations that reduced human beings to helpless instruments of technology in the name of development. The dehumanization was anathema to Gandhi, whether it emanated in the Capitalist system or the Communist system. I still remember how Gandhi was condemned in both camps, whatever may be the encomiums he is earning after he died. His trusteeship principle, namely that those who possess wealth must do so as trustees of the poor, was equally inconvenient to both camps and sounded very odd at the time, as it does even today *prima facie*. Yet I wish thinkers of today to go into this principle deeply. I have every hope that economic relations eventually will need to be redefined on the basis of a new meaning to be attached to the concepts of ownership and possession. What is ownership? Who owns the air, the oceans, the land? There is a saying in India that all land belongs to God. When did ownership of land start in India? Only after the British introduced what is called the "Permanent Settlement" according to which a piece of land belongs to a person if his/her name is written in a particular register in a particular office. Why should it be so? It is so, because the British wanted it to be so. This is how it is. We remember the time when the ownership of land was not so rigid as to be proved in a court of law. People just lived on the land; it was communally owned. People believed that land belongs to God and, therefore, available to everyone in the village. In those days, the population was not as big as now and the entire legal proprietary system of land, as conceived by the British government had not been transplanted. It is true that the emperors in India had the system of revenue collection, but it was not as rigid as we have later made it. The assertion that all land belongs to God is fully ingrained in Indian thought since time immemorial and Gandhiji's principle derives from it.

These concerns were wedded to two additional concerns which had not been expressed by any of Gandhi's contemporaries, though they are forcefully articulated among the *green* activists today. Where is Gandhi and where is the green movement? It is at least separated by 50 years, if not more. These concerns are baneful consequences of mindless consumerism, on the one hand; and the

need for eco-friendly development, on the other. In his writings on social and economic questions, which are exploratory rather than definitive, Gandhi anticipates the notion of sustainable development at the same time as he expresses the need for devising systems of social production and environmental protection that are supportive rather than antagonistic towards each other. The views of the Mahatma on such issues, which are sustained by an acute sense of the practical and the desirable, constitute a rich source of insights about economic growth in developing and developed societies. He asserted, crisply, that in God's creation, there is enough for man's need but not for man's greed.

Gandhi's plea for sustainable development did not exhaust his concern for the processes of growth in modern society. Indeed, if only tangentially, he was deeply concerned with market and command systems as engines of increasing production in the modern world. That the market, if left to its own devices, becomes an obstruction rather than a stimulus to production, is one of the central arguments in *Hind Swaraj*, to which I have referred earlier. Yet the Mahatma was equally aware that command systems of social production, too, can throw up their own distinct pathologies.

Since the genesis of Indian culture in classical antiquity, there exists in our collective consciousness a deeply lodged belief that in the social, no less than in the metaphysical, domain the 'middle path' is the most desirable of all paths. This notion was initially articulated by Gautam Buddha in the sixth century BC at the first flowering of our civilization. Men of politics, no less than men of religion, were deeply influenced by this notion over the centuries. In the years since 1947, the notion of the 'middle path' was one of the central principles behind official policies – particularly policies of economic growth. Very recently, the notion of the 'middle path' has been reiterated in respect of initiatives connected with economic growth. What sustains this remarkable continuity is probably the epic scale of Indian society and the culturally plural cluster of communities which constitute its social body.

The notion of the middle path as a sensible means to economic growth is powerfully endorsed in the writings of the Mahatma on social and economic questions, though these writings are tentative

and exploratory. And its legitimacy goes even deeper in the Indian past. Here is a fertile field for intellectual inquiry by those engaged in reflection on economic issues, no less than for those engaged in social action, in different parts of the world.

Last but not the least, I would like to speak of the great political disquiet of our times, as it stems from the crisis of identities, particularly local and regional identities, within the system of nation states. Gandhi was very alive to the issues of identity, partly because of the plural character of the Indian society, and partly also because the creation of modern nationhood in India – in place of an older civilizational bond – meant the generation of an entirely novel overarching identity. The *satyagrahi* in Mahatma Gandhi handled this task with a sensitivity and skill rare in the history of social and political movements in our times.

What were the factors behind Gandhi's conspicuous success in mobilizing different social groups in support of the struggle for nationhood in India? Further, to what extent are these factors relevant to the handling of issues of local and regional identities within nations in the world today? There can be no easy answers to these questions, since the problem is one of tremendous complexity. However, the manner in which Gandhi conceptualized the role of the citizen in the modern State and the manner also in which he actually drew the citizen into social and political activity, provides clues to the reasons behind his success. At the very outset, he did not look upon the individual and society as being in the political domain. Instead, he sought to reach out to the individual-in-society as the basis of social action: as he relied upon his spoken words as a political actor of high moral integrity, they rippled across the fabric of society, to provide the basis of social unity on a truly monumental scale.

In the very nature of things, whether it was in South Africa in 1906, or subcontinental India in 1930, mass action could only be concerted through *satyagrahi* action and through the voluntary association of individuals whose hearts and minds had been touched and transformed in great movements of collective endeavour. Gandhi believed in action and asserted that one ounce of action

was better than a ton of barren ideas. Of course, by action he meant the action of a *satyagrahi*.

There are, of course, no blueprints that can provide an infallible design for individual action or for organized protest by entire communities. However, we have in Gandhian discourse the sensitivity to understand the anguish of wronged individuals or communities; just as we also have in Gandhian discourse the compassionate statecraft which through moral mediation can help resolve some of the problems that affect the contemporary world.

How then, can we sum up the thought and practice of Mahatma Gandhi, a truly epochal figure, whose capacity for social intervention and moral praxis is reflected as much in the diverse arenas where he acted in his lifetime as it is reflected in the relevance of his discourse to the resolution of a wide spectrum of problems long after his martyrdom in 1948? That Gandhi was a remarkable individual who developed, existentially rather than systematically, a moral code and a novel calculus of social protest is readily conceded by those engaged in reflection no less than those engaged in action in our times. Indeed, the Mahatma has made a distinctive innovation of morally oriented political action in the twentieth century.

No less momentous is the fact that more than four decades after his death, the ideas which Mahatma Gandhi placed before India and the world are being acknowledged as capable of finding solutions to some of the most pressing issues faced by humankind. Gandhi's relevance is being rediscovered as we move towards a new era in which wealth generation, political organization, social ordering and spiritual creativity are undergoing a revolutionary transformation. Seen from that perspective, Gandhi stands out as one of the towering figures of our century. Indeed, if the stature of men and women is to be measured by the fact that their ideas attain increasing validity and momentum as time passes farther and farther beyond their lives, Gandhi stands in lonely eminence in the twentieth century. Perhaps generations to come will turn to him increasingly as they wrestle with the problems of existence in an era which holds out a potential of unprecedented moral and material creativity through individual and collective human endeavour.



All the worldly possessions left by Gandhi, “the Great Soul in beggar’s garb”, as the poet Tagore once called him: dinner bowls, wooden fork and spoon, three porcelain monkeys, his diary, prayer-book, watch, spittoon, paper knives and two pairs of sandals. They are kept in the house in New Delhi in the garden of which Gandhi met his death.

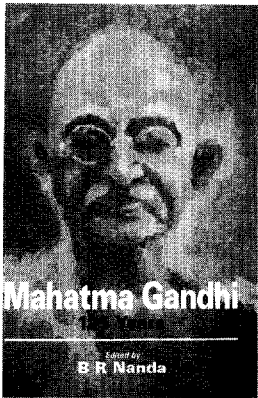
Photo Gandhi Smarak Sangrahalaya, Ahmedabad

Mahatma Gandhi



The Inextinguishable Starlight

Federico Mayor
Director-General of UNESCO



Reprint from

Mahatma Gandhi
125 years

Edited by B. R. Nanda

*Indian Council for Cultural
Relations, New Delhi*

*New Age International
Publishers Limited
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New Delhi 1995*

DROP by drop, drop by drop, the water's force – gentle, flexible, persistent – pierces the rock, the sturdiest pillar yields to the steady liquid thrust. Drop by drop, word by word, the walls that separate us tumble, the gags that silence us and the shackles that bind us are unfastened. We shall go forward together, all different travellers on the road towards bright dawns, armed only with the force of our ideals, with the indomitable will to conquer by inventing new pathways and with songs of peace on our lips. Without rancour, but indocile because the hour of the rebellion of the spirit has arrived. The word counters the sword. There will be no more confrontations, because war has ended.

Navigators of all seas and all shores towards a more harmonious future: war has ended. Learn and remember it well when self-serving voices tell you that there is no alternative but weapons. Only the word. And the courage to hold out our hand even though our forehead and heart burn with memories and wounds that counsel rejection.

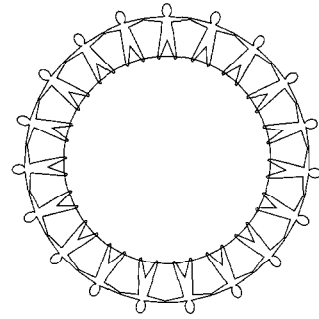
Now we shall need to discern the signs that lead to essential things. For only in them shall we find the terms of our reconciliation; the threads with which to weave the multi-coloured fabrics of our common garment; the melting pot of our mingled identities, tomorrow's guarantee.

From his small, spare, thin body flowed an inexhaustible fountain, and the arid, rough and cracked earth was turned into ears of corn and sweet fruits. Clothed in the lightest of garments, a herald and pilgrim. Drop by drop the vessel fills. Drop by drop, the square and highways become rivers of men and women who win the race without spilling blood. Gandhi, the yeast that leavens and gives meaning to huge masses. Gandhi, the sentinel. Gandhi, inextinguishable starlight of so many nights of so many days.

“I learnt from my illiterate but wise mother that all rights to be deserved and preserved came from duty well done”. We shall proclaim our rights, word by word, drop by drop. We shall defend them with the same resolve with which we put into practice our duties. Together we shall plant olives and together we shall sow seeds of love where previously there were fences and enclosures.

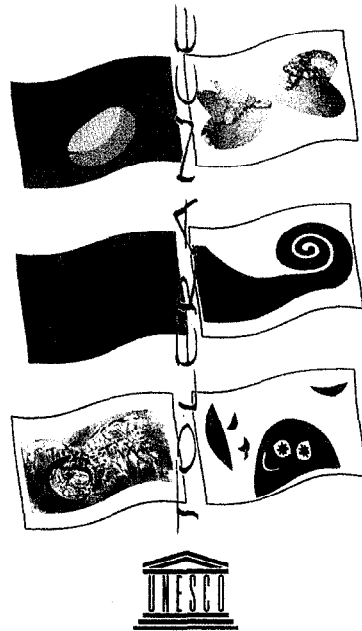
Word by word. Without yielding, without violence. And we shall be able in this way to look into the depths of our children’s eyes.

1 Letter addressed by Mahatma Gandhi from Bhangi Colony in New Delhi, on 25 May 1947, to Dr Julian S. Huxley, Director-General of UNESCO, Paris.



Declaration of Principles on Tolerance

Proclaimed and signed on 16 November 1995



*T*HE Member States of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, meeting in Paris at the twenty-eighth session of the General Conference, from 25 October to 16 November 1995,

Preamble

Bearing in mind that the United Nations Charter states “We, the peoples of the United Nations determined to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war,... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, ... and for these ends to practise tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours”,

Recalling that the Preamble to the Constitution of UNESCO, adopted on 16 November 1945, states that “peace, if it is not to fail, must be founded on the intellectual and moral solidarity of mankind”,

Recalling also that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights affirms that “Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion” (Article 18), “of opinion and expression” (Article 19), and that education “should promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups” (Article 26),

Noting relevant international instruments including:

- the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights,
- the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights,
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination,
- the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,
- the Convention on the Rights of the Child,
- the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol and regional instruments,
- the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women,

- the Convention against Torture and other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment,
- the Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance Based on Religion or Belief,
- the Declaration on the Rights of Persons Belonging to National or Ethnic, Religious and Linguistic Minorities,
- the Declaration on Measures to Eliminate International Terrorism,
- the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of the World Conference on Human Rights,
- the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action adopted by the World Summit for Social Development,
- the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice,
- the UNESCO Convention and Recommendation against Discrimination in Education,

Bearing in mind the objectives of the Third Decade to Combat Racism and Racial Discrimination, the World Decade for Human Rights Education, and the International Decade of the World's Indigenous People,

Taking into consideration the recommendations of regional conferences organized in the framework of the United Nations Year for Tolerance in accordance with UNESCO General Conference 27C/Resolution 5.14, as well as the conclusions and recommendations of other conferences and meetings organized by Member States within the programme of the United Nations Year for Tolerance,

Alarmed by the current rise in acts of intolerance, violence, terrorism, xenophobia, aggressive nationalism, racism, anti-Semitism, exclusion, marginalization and discrimination directed against national, ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, refugees, migrant workers, immigrants and vulnerable groups within societies, as well as acts of violence and intimidation committed against individuals exercising their freedom of opinion and expression – all of which threaten the consolidation of peace and democracy both nationally and internationally and which are all obstacles to development,

Emphasizing the responsibilities of Member States to develop and encourage respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms for all, without distinction as to race, gender, language, national origin, religion or disability, and to combat intolerance,

*Adopt and solemnly proclaim
this Declaration of Principles on Tolerance.*

Resolving to take all positive measures necessary to promote tolerance in our societies, because tolerance is not only a cherished principle, but also a necessity for peace and for the economic and social advancement of all peoples.

We declare the following:

Article 1

MEANING OF TOLERANCE

- 1.1 Tolerance is respect, acceptance and appreciation of the rich diversity of our world's cultures, our forms of expression and ways of being human. It is fostered by knowledge, openness, communication and freedom of thought, conscience and belief. Tolerance is harmony in difference. It is not only a moral duty, it is also a political and legal requirement. Tolerance, the virtue that makes peace possible, contributes to the replacement of the culture of war by a culture of peace.
- 1.2 Tolerance is not concession, condescension or indulgence. Tolerance is, above all, an active attitude prompted by recognition of the universal human rights and fundamental freedoms of others. In no circumstance can it be used to justify infringements of these fundamental values. Tolerance is to be exercised by individuals, groups and States.
- 1.3 Tolerance is the responsibility that upholds human rights, pluralism (including cultural pluralism), democracy and the rule of law. It involves the rejection of dogmatism and absolutism and affirms the standards set out in international human rights instruments.

- 1.4 Consistent with respect for human rights, the practice of tolerance does not mean toleration of social injustice or the abandonment or weakening of one's convictions. It means that one is free to adhere to one's own convictions and accepts that others adhere to theirs. It means accepting the fact that human beings, naturally diverse in their appearance, situation, speech, behaviour and values, have the right to live in peace and to be as they are. It also means that one's views are not to be imposed on others.

Article 2

STATE LEVEL

- 2.1 Tolerance at the State level requires just and impartial legislation, law enforcement and judicial and administrative process. It also requires that economic and social opportunities be made available to each person without any discrimination. Exclusion and marginalization can lead to frustration, hostility and fanaticism.
- 2.2 In order to achieve a more tolerant society, States should ratify existing international human rights conventions, and draft new legislation, where necessary, to ensure equality of treatment and of opportunity for all groups and individuals in society.
- 2.3 It is essential for international harmony that individuals, communities and nations accept and respect the multicultural character of the human family. Without tolerance there can be no peace, and without peace there can be no development or democracy.
- 2.4 Intolerance may take the form of marginalization of vulnerable groups and their exclusion from social and political participation, as well as violence and discrimination against them. As confirmed in the Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, « All individuals and groups have the right to be different » (Article 1.2).

Article 3

SOCIAL DIMENSIONS

- 3.1 In the modern world, tolerance is more essential than ever before. It is an age marked by the globalization of the economy and by rapidly increasing mobility, communication, integration and interdependence, large-scale migrations and displacement of populations, urbanization and changing social patterns. Since every part of the world is characterized by diversity, escalating intolerance and strife potentially menace every region. It is not confined to any country, but is a global threat.
- 3.2 Tolerance is necessary between individuals and at the family and community levels. Tolerance promotion and the shaping of attitudes of openness, mutual listening and solidarity should take place in schools and universities, and through non-formal education, at home and in the workplace. The communication media are in a position to play a constructive role in facilitating free and open dialogue and discussion, disseminating the values of tolerance, and highlighting the dangers of indifference towards the rise in intolerant groups and ideologies.
- 3.3 As affirmed by the UNESCO Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, measures must be taken to ensure equality in dignity and rights for individuals and groups wherever necessary. In this respect, particular attention should be paid to vulnerable groups which are socially or economically disadvantaged so as to afford them the protection of the laws and social measures in force, in particular with regard to housing, employment and health, to respect the authenticity of their culture and values, and to facilitate their social and occupational advancement and integration, especially through education.
- 3.4 Appropriate scientific studies and networking should be undertaken to co-ordinate the international community's response to this global challenge, including analysis by the social sciences of root causes and effective countermeasures, as well as research and monitoring in support of policy-making and standard-setting action by Member States.

Article 4

EDUCATION

- 4.1 Education is the most effective means of preventing intolerance. The first step in tolerance education is to teach people what their shared rights and freedoms are, so that they may be respected, and to promote the will to protect those of others.
- 4.2 Education for tolerance should be considered an urgent imperative; that is why it is necessary to promote systematic and rational tolerance teaching methods that will address the cultural, social, economic, political and religious sources of intolerance – major roots of violence and exclusion. Education policies and programmes should contribute to development of understanding, solidarity and tolerance among individuals as well as among ethnic, social, cultural, religious and linguistic groups and nations.
- 4.3 Education for tolerance should aim at countering influences that lead to fear and exclusion of others, and should help young people to develop capacities for independent judgement, critical thinking and ethical reasoning.
- 4.4 We pledge to support and implement programmes of social science research and education for tolerance, human rights and non-violence. This means devoting special attention to improving teacher training, curricula, the content of textbooks and lessons, and other educational materials including new educational technologies, with a view to educating caring and responsible citizens open to other cultures, able to appreciate the value of freedom, respectful of human dignity and differences, and able to prevent conflicts or resolve them by non-violent means.

Article 5 **COMMITMENT OF ACTION**

We commit ourselves to promoting tolerance and non-violence through programmes and institutions in the fields of education, science, culture and communication.

Article 6 **INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR TOLERANCE**

In order to generate public awareness, emphasize the dangers of intolerance and react with renewed commitment and action in support of tolerance promotion and education, we solemnly proclaim 16 November the annual International Day for Tolerance.